

QUESTION 1.

Mrs. Owens: I would like to ask two questions about the part in the reading of feeling one's I: whether the word feeling, in this context, is different from sensation or awareness of I. And the other question is: that if I and It separate, I sees the body. Then what has the feeling of I? Is there another separation?

Mr. Nyland: I would not know for sure if the word feeling is correctly used or not. I do not know what it was in Russian. As far as my own personal experience is concerned, I probably would not use the word feeling. I would use the word 'a realization in line with what is meant by having an experience of being awake' and simply reserving the word feeling for a function of my feeling center.

I do believe that if one makes an effort of waking up, that it has to start from a wish; that one has to know what to do. And that, therefore, there has to be a clarity in ones mind about what is involved in making an effort to wake up. If, as a result of that, I discover or come to a realization of two different parts existing, it is logical that I will ascribe it to the original wish and a result of such a wish; and then come to the conclusion that I now feel as a result of the beginning of my feeling.

If I try to describe a state of awareness, I do not think it is right to use the word feeling because the experience is not a question of the result of the feeling, but it is a question of a realization of a different kind of state of Being. And I do not think that feeling, at that time, belongs to the statement of "I Am." The same applies to the separation of I and It. If I exists, even for one moment, I have a realization of its existence but I cannot describe it. Immediately, when I start to describe it,

I fall back in my ordinary functioning of ordinary life. And I must let it go at the point where I have the realization of a separation. And I simply accept that as a fact, without wishing to describe it and knowing that if I do describe it, I would take away the value of the experience of Being. It is rather very difficult to explain because, as soon as one starts to formulate, one falls again into the same kind of a trap of the usage of words we are familiar with in ordinary life and a description of certain functions of the different centers which, as far as I can see or as far as I know, based on my own experience, do not enter into a realization of Being. And, at the same time, a being, if it exists for one moment, should be able to express itself into its component parts of which feeling is one.

So, in trying to define it, I am really between the devil and the deep sea. I have a realization of existence. And now I wish to emphasize the fact that there is a separation. And the only way by which I can express that is by using a certain word. And I choose feeling for that simply that feeling leads to the realization of such an existence. And, at the same time, I can not describe that than only afterwards in a certain form of memory, remembering that such a situation existed.

QUESTION 2.

Mr. Owens: I would like to ask a question about what Ouspensky says about events. I connected up events with impressions. I wonder if impressions, that is, ordinary impressions have different value; different kinds of impressions, taken consciously, could feed me better, that is, some impressions better than others?

Mr. Nyland: Why should events be impressions?

Mr. Owens: Well, events comprise what I receive as impressions.

Mr. Nyland: They still stay events and you translate them, in yourself, as having received impressions of events. It is not the event itself. So, the events continue to go on. I, of course, have a reaction towards such events and I call them impressions. If I now try, in the usage of the word, 'to make them conscious,' then I receive such impressions in a different way. That is, I receive an impression but, if I try to become conscious, in the sense of being aware, then the impressions entering me will have a different effect on me.

Now, if I am looking for the possibility of making impressions conscious, to use again that phrase, that is, if I try to separate out of the possible events with which I am confronted, those events which will be helpful for me to either remind me that I ought to become conscious or actually produce in me a certain state leading towards more consciousness, then I start to classify events in accordance with their value for my work.

So, I think we have to keep it quite separate. I do not know what the result was on Mr. Ouspensky when he had the events which occurred at that time come into him, as it were, and also when he describes them, at the present time, in this book. For me, at the present time, when I read it, it is a description of the history as he saw it. What the result was on him, I do not know. At most, I can say "If there were similar events taking place at the present time, for me, what would be my attitude towards them? and would they have in them any particular value that I could use for the sake of my own work?" And that is, probably as far as I would go because I am not, as yet, experiencing events as they have been described. And, to be honest, I hope I never will. But, I can theorize about what would I do if.

And even that, at the present time, when I am not experiencing them, has no value to me.

Mr. Owens: Well, I wondered in terms of picking some sort of external environment for myself: say, I go to church or I go to visit a prison. If I tried to make efforts in those two places to be awake, would the impressions have more value than another?

Mr. Nyland: But who would be the judge? I have an aim to try to become conscious. I ascribe it to the possibility that if I receive impressions, that in being in a certain state when I receive them, which I call a state of awareness as a result of an effort towards consciousness, that then I receive from such impressions a different kind of food. This is a statement that I simply make and I base it partly on experience if I try to work on myself.

Now, if I am interested in the question of being awake or becoming conscious, naturally I become interested in making the impressions in such a form if I create conditions of that kind, that it will be most helpful for me. So, having an adventurous spirit, I go out and go to church and work on myself; or, I go to prison, or I sit home, or I meet with friends, or I meet with enemies, or I try to catch myself when I am arguing, a variety of all different kind of conditions in which I, as an ordinary person, live. And I am now trying to find out where the _____ is that is most conducive to the state I desire? Again, that is all. You know if you do it. If you do not do it, it remains theory. Someone else can tell you what their result is. It still is theory for you. Your experience is the only thing that can teach you. And, if you want to be adventurous enough to put yourself in a variety of different kind of conditions in order to find out how aware you can be, it is your work. You know, it has nothing to do with any one of us and it surely has nothing

to do with Ouspensky.

QUESTION 3.

Mr. Postal: There is much space in this reading devoted to the question of whether work would be possible in _____ at that time. For years, in reading this, I have been struck by what was being told us in this. And I have never been able to resolve what seems to me various different positions which were found in what Mr. Ouspensky thought, what Mr. Gurdjieff thought, and what I would think about this. I related this to how the conditions of life would relate to the possibility of work both on a large scale, political and economic, a general large scale, but also a very individual specific condition. But I have never been able to get from this passage a particular conviction in myself about what was said here about it.

Mr. Nyland: Really, I do not understand what you are after. Here is a passage in a description of certain events taking place at a certain time which Mr. Ouspensky experienced. As such, I think it is exactly the same as any kind of a passage that I read anywhere. And particularly when it has any reference to work or to Mr. Gurdjieff or a description of people who are interested in work. I think that one starts gradually to take any kind of reading like that as: Is there a possibility in it for me to use it for the purpose of work on myself the way I understand it?

Now, I am quite certain that there are certain things sometimes written about which are a little bit more descriptive and perhaps will not give as much behind or inbetween the lines as at other times. I am quite certain there is a difference between an actual description of how to work and a description of events of the Bolsheviks. At the same time, when I start to think about this and I try to visualize and I try to put myself in the place of Ouspensky or of the other people, or seeing Gurdjieff fixing up a dynamo and

for Ouspensky meeting his father and mother and the family, and Ouspensky being filled with an idea he would like to talk about the table of time. He is anxious partly to go to Europe. He may have to give up such plans because apparently Gurdjieff is not, has no intention of doing it, a description of Gurdjieff first doing the thing and then maybe changing his mind and doing something else. What is the particular value of any description of this kind? When it has a relation to something that is of interest to us, since these people have become interesting to us, and interesting to us because they are representatives of work.

Therefore, I take myself as well as I can, try to place myself in such conditions. And I immediately will ask, "How would I react? What would be my particular attitude? What would I do under such conditions?" I do not experience them. I do not experience them. But I can try to see what is there in me that would react in a certain way, having in mind constantly the possibility of work, provided I myself, at the present time, am so much interested in work that I would like to find out how can I continue with work even if such conditions existed.

That is all you can get out of a passage like that. It is then a direct translation of anything that is being said and that you read into something that you partly imagine or, at least, that can give you, at the time when you read it and when you start to think about it, a definite attitude of how you now should work.

You see, I do not see your difficulty. I am not looking for anything in particular in any kind of a description if I am interested in work. I am only looking at something that I read with the possibility of: what could

it give me for work at the present time if this is of paramount importance? If that is my aim, almost anything could _____ me, provided I have the wish for it. And I am quite certain that if one reads it with that in mind, there is a great deal that one can get out of this description. It is not directly related to a description of how to work, how to wake up, how to do this, how to do that. But it certainly belongs to ordinary life in which certain conditions take place and how I, as an ordinary person, will be affected. At times I know it already. At other times I imagine it. At other times I not wish it. You understand what I mean? Does it answer?

Mr. Postal: Well, I dont know. I was referring, in particular, to the passage where it said that Mr. Gurdjieff said that the conditions at that time made it possible, that the ideas should be present then.

Mr. Nyland: But that is a different matter. Would actually such events, if they occurred to you, that is, if you experienced them, would they be helpful for you? In other words, do you agree with the statement he makes. Quite honestly, it must be a result of your own experience if you can believe it or not. And the experience of such events occurring, I doubt very much that you have experienced them.

So, therefore, it will rest in theory. If we talk about it theoretically, differences of conditions, whenever they happen, which are out of the ordinary, which tend to shake me up, which tend to break down any habitual way of living, where I have to make adjustments in my life because the conditions have changed, always will be conducive to the possibility of being aware simply because, in the breaking down and breaking up of such habitual forms of living, I will experience a friction. I will ask myself a question, "Why is it?" And, if I have work as an aim, I will ask myself, "Can I use

this friction, this, you might say, discontent for the purpose as energy to help me to be more awake?" That, in general, could be a statement. And I am quite certain that it was that way that it was meant.